2: Durham B-5 (ca. 1910)1928 EG1 Albania EG1
Contemporary Macedonians EF8
Montenegrins EF5

757 278 enough creature near Scutari, was esteemed as very good for consumptive patients.

A [262] The flesh of the common land tortoise was thought of great value for all convalescents. When I came out of hospital Marko had prepared a savoury stew for my supper. I ate heartily. "Thank God!" cried the good old man, "you have eaten 'breshké,' and you will soon be strong and well." He fetched the shell of the large tortoise which had provided my meal.

A [136]

A 164 136 So common are these tortoises that an Albanian proverb says: "There is no mountain without a wolf and no plain without a tortoise."

Diseases.—Intestinal troubles of all kinds are rife in the Balkans, owing to bad food, and in some districts to a morbid appetite for very acid food. Intestinal worms—tape, thread, and round—are very common.

A 165 A preparation of buckthorn is given.

Infant mortality is excessively high all through the Balkans. If 853 a mother can nurse her child till the flocks are giving milk plentifully it stands a chance; if not, it is fed on parboiled maize-flour and heavy maize-bread. The abdomen swells greatly, and the child often dies; A 854 and, as I have stated, desire to preserve the child from the Evil Eye 754 causes many to be half-suffocated in the cradle. Only the toughest M survive, and they are very tough. The Albanians, Montenegrins, and C M Macedonians, whom I have had charge of as sick or wounded, do not A suffer from shock, nor are they as sensitive to pain as West Europeans. ● 151

Wounds.—The Albanian tribesmen were far cleverer with wounds A than with sickness. They had a traditional antiseptic treatment which 757 was very successful. Old Marash Hutzi of Hoti, who had learnt the 752 art from his grandfather, explained it to me. A wound must never be touched with water; it must be thoroughly washed out with rakia (brandy distilled from grapes). He judged the state of a wound by smelling it carefully. When well washed—when it perforated a limb he poured rakia right through—he dressed it with an ointment he made from white wax, olive oil, pine resin, and a decoction of the bark of green elder twigs. If deep, he plugged it with wool soaked in this ointment. In hot weather the dressings should be changed twice a day; and so long as the wound was foul he washed it daily with rakia. He saved a leg—compound comminuted fracture caused by horse-kick—which the Turkish military surgeon was going to amputate and made a quite usable, though rather shortened, limb of it. The grateful patient gave him thirty francs, the biggest fee the good old A man had ever received. He had made his own instruments—some 757 probes, forceps, a small saw made from a barrel hoop, and some knives. 826 From his grandfather's and his own experience he had a fair knowledge 752 of where the main arteries ran, "where it was safe to cut and where

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757 278 antiseptic properties. This plant is still used for similar purposes by homœopathists.

An ingenious way of keeping a limb warm is to wrap it in hot dough.

757 753 It was always difficult to persuade folk to have a running sore or boil cleaned up, as they believed that it was very healthy—a disease was coming out, therefore the more pus the better. I persuaded the father of a little girl who had scratched her face and got it covered with nasty sores to take her to the Austrian hospital. The doctor cleaned it up in a few days and the father was furious. He was sure the disease was now driven into the child and said he should hold the doctor guilty if she died. Luckily she flourished.

757 151 Two examples of resistance to pain and shock, out of very many I have known, will give an idea of Albanian toughness.

A Shala friend of mine, Cherim Nue, came one night from his mountains to Scutari to ask me for a "bar" (herb). He was in great pain with a swollen face. As he had two very bad teeth, I told him to go to the Turkish dentist and have them out, and gave him the fee—four chereks. Next day he returned triumphant to pay me back one cherek. He thought it a pity to waste four on the dentist, so he bought [563 326] a pair of dentistry forceps from a gipsy smith for three chereks and pulled out his own teeth. He showed me how he had managed a good wrench by sitting on the ground and twisting his left leg over his right arm. He set up as dentist in the mountains, and last time I saw him 759 told me with glee that I had made his fortune. He had pulled out most of the teeth of the neighbourhood.

752 757 The following case gives an idea of what an Albanian peasant can survive: A man was standing on top of the steps of a village house in Zadrima loading a cart. He slipped and fell on to the sharp stakes that formed its sides and ripped open his abdomen. The peritoneum was badly torn and the bowels protruded. His family filled the wound [278] with a favourite remedy—mud mixed with grass; and he lay in his hut for a week. As he then appeared to be dying they put him on a cart and took him some six or eight hours over a bad track to the Austrian hospital at Scutari, where they arrived at midnight. The doctor who was called up told me that the man appeared to be moribund. The wound was in a horrible state of mixed mud, pus, and bowel. "More from professional instinct than because I thought it would be the least use, I cleaned it and dressed it. But I was so sure the man would die that I told his comrades they were to wait till next day to take his body home in the cart." To his surprise, when he went his rounds next morning the patient's high temperature had fallen, 757 the wound was going well, and he was comparatively cheerful. He 278 made good progress for some days, but had a fixed belief that "English